



Feb. 15, 2006

Vol. 1, Issue 2

Published in the interest of personnel assigned to the 1st Brigade Combat Team

Inside the Raider Review



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U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt

IED task force director visits 1BCT... From left, Maj. Gen. J.D.

Thurman, commanding general, 4th Inf. Div., an unidentified member of the Joint IED Task Force, Col. James Pasquarette, commander, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div., and Gen. (R) Montgomery Meigs, director of the Joint IED Task Force take a look at the digital technology the 1st BCT is using in their tactical operations center. Meigs was in Taji, Iraq, Jan. 27 on a fact finding mission interviewing Soldiers who have first hand knowledge of dealing with IEDs.

Team helps' locals

By Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt
Editor, Raider Review

Soldiers from the 1st Mechanized Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division along with 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and Company A, 490th Civil

Affairs Battalion out of Abilene, Texas, teamed up to help members of the local community near here with free medical care, school supplies, water, sleeping mats and toys for the kids at a medical capabilities operation, Jan. 25.

The operation took place at Al Kardusia

Primary School in Banat Al Hassan where 150 men, women and children lined up to be seen by the medical team. Abbas Mhson, a local medical provider, participated in the event. After their medical check-up, the locals were handed much needed supplies they could use around their — (go to page 16, Iraqi)

1st Brigade making incredible impact with Iraqi community

By Col. James Pasquarette
Commander, 1st BCT

Soldiers of the Raider Brigade. It's been almost a month since our Transfer of Authority with 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division – although I must admit it seems like quite a bit longer than that. We have settled into a good battle rhythm – and I believe we are really making a difference with the Iraqi people. I continue to be impressed with the focus and energy of the Raider Brigade Soldiers. I've spent quite a bit of time with our Soldiers both inside the FOB and outside. I realize that a good bit of you are working way outside your trained area of expertise. That's the way it is right now. We have a mission – and it



requires us to work together to make all the ends meet. We have over 140 Soldiers committed to training the 9th Iraqi Army Division. These Soldiers are making an incredible impact – training their Iraqi counter-parts, facilitating the conduct of combined US/Iraqi operations, and presenting a professional standard for the Iraqi army to emulate. I want to personally thank these Soldiers for their contributions to date.

We have hundreds of other Soldiers working outside of their MOS on a daily basis. The 4th Support Battalion is operating the Division Holding Area Annex (DHAA) where we secure the detainees from current operations. This is a “zero defects” mission – and they are doing fantastic. The 4th Spt. Bn. is also providing security escort for myriad missions throughout our area of operation. These Soldiers are proud of what they are doing, and have melded into a tight team. The 1st

Special Troops Battalion has fielded a Task Force Iron Claw team that employs specialized equipment to counter the IED threat. Again, these Soldiers never expected to do this until we got into theater, but they are already experts in the employment of

"You should be proud of what you're doing here in Iraq – I certainly am proud of you and your contribution. What we are doing here is making a difference."

these unique assets. The Straight Arrows of 4-42 FA are securing FOB Taji by coordinating the base defense for the three brigades and affiliated contractors here. These Soldiers joined the Army to fire artillery rounds – but they're now guarding our FOB – and doing a superb job. These are (go to page 14, Raider)

The *Raider Review* is published bi-monthly in the interest of the servicemembers and their families of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

The *Raider Review* is an Army funded newsletter authorized for the members of the U.S. Army, under the provision of AR 360-1.

The views in The *Raider Review* are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.

To contribute to the Raider Review contact the 1st BCT Public Affairs Office or send stories, photos and information to brent.hunt@BCT1ID4.army.mil.

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Raiders stand tall on battlefield

By Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Wells
Command Sergeant Major, 1st BCT

Raiders stand tall! You have a lot to be proud of. I have the utmost confidence in our NCOs abilities to execute the orders of our officers and help lead this great brigade to victory. Our actions on the battlefield require every Soldier to be tactically sound and personally disciplined. With the Iraqi army's help, we are finding and destroying the terrorists who emplace IEDs, the IED makers and the financiers while



teaching the Iraqi army soldiers the advantage of a vigorous, well maintained NCO Corps.

January and February brought us rain and near freezing temperatures. You can feel the cold sink right down to your bones (at least my old ass bones) when you get near the Grand Canal or the Tigris River. I stand out there in the middle of the night and see the Raiders out in the weather; cold, wet, needing sleep and loving every minute of it. One thing's certain; there are no tulips in this brigade! No delicate little flowers that wilt in the cold or cracks under pressure.

We have the best weapons and equipment our country can provide and we're the lucky few who can put it to good use. Our equipment and weapons gives us an advantage over an enemy. Every Soldier must be

intimately familiar with every weapon and piece of equipment at his/her disposal. How it functions, how to maintain it and how it can best be used to kill the enemy. Knowing how to properly wear your personal equipment (IBAS, Kevlar, eye and ear protection) is just as important for your personal safety as knowing how to boresight an M1 Tank. All these skills are learned through instruction and repetition. Don't think you know it all after a single block of instruction, because training doesn't stop in a war zone. So study your craft and commit it to memory. Discipline yourself to being the best rifleman, gunner, #1 man, medic or whatever your chosen field of expertise. Never forget you are first a Soldier, a Warrior who's obligated to actively seek out, close with and destroy the enemy.

Memorial Ceremony held for Capt. Cox

By Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt
Editor, Raider Review

A memorial ceremony was held at the Eagle Ministry Chapel on Camp Taji, Iraq, for a 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Soldier killed in action while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07.

Capt. Simon Timothy Cox, executive officer for Company B, 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment was killed on Feb. 2 when his

patrol hit an improvised explosive device outside the gates of Camp Taji.

"Captain Cox died doing what he loved, leading Soldiers," said Lt. Col. Robert Kmiecik, commander of 1st Bn., 66th AR. "It's only fitting that his career ended where it began, with the Infantry."

"As you remember Captain Cox, say a prayer for his family," Kmiecik added. "Say a prayer for his two sons, James and Simon. They will have to grow up without their father, but they will know he was a true American

hero."

The Lone Star State native was born July 28, 1975, in Fort Worth, Texas, until he enlisted in the Army in 1994 as an infantryman.

Following the Engineer Officer's Basic Course, Cox was assigned to 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. where he deployed to Tikrit, Iraq, in support of OIF I. There he served as a Sapper platoon leader and scout platoon leader until he redeployed back to the Fort Hood, Texas, in March 2004.

He became a heavy engineer platoon leader during 4th Inf. Div.'s

reorganization until he was assigned to the Bayonets of Co. B., where he served as a rifle platoon leader. Cox successfully led his rifle platoon through multiple live-fire exercises and a National Training Center rotation in Fort Irwin, Calif., before deploying to Iraq for the second time in December 2005.

His awards and decorations include: the Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation — (go to page 14, Chapel)

Legal Corner: 'Every Soldier is a foreign claims commissioner'

By Capt. Evan Seamone
1st BCT JAG Office

The day is a Wednesday, and you can tell from the massive group of Iraqis at the entrance to the Government Information Center (GIC) they mean business. They come from far and near, whether tall or short, sheiks or farmers. Wednesdays are pay days for claims, and you can feel the anticipation building in the crowd, which looks a bit like gamblers at the wheel of fortune, hoping today they will leave richer. While some will be happier than others with the payout, the difference between these claimants and gamblers is foreign claims is not about chance; like most things in the Army, it's about adherence to the right regulation, in this case AR 27-20.

Just last week, this claims office alone paid out over \$35,000 for all sorts of damage. Lots of these claims came from units that have now left. Here is just a sampling:

- use of a house when a unit turned it into a traffic control point;
- damage from convoys when they got too close to cars stopped in the road;
- damage from debris or ricochets when nearby homes were hit during firefights or explosions;
- gravel dumped during searches for smuggled



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Evan Seamone

Sgt. 1st Class Mike Cantu of HHD, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. and the JAG claims pay agent, counts out hundreds of dollars at a time to pay an approved claim. The claims office thanks you in advance for ensuring that U.S. taxpayer money is properly used.

weapons;

- damage from searches where doors have been kicked in, locks broken, etc; and
- use of land closed off to clear space around Camp Taji and loss of various crops.

It may be surprising, but most of these claims were denied. In a lot of these cases, the claims were ones that Soldiers actually wanted to be paid. Soldiers submitted notes with comments like, "We raided the wrong house and told the owner to file a claim for the damage." Or, "We told him to dump three truckloads of gravel, but there was nothing underneath." Even, "This woman's child was killed due to a ricochet.

This was not her fault and we told her to file a claim." Files like this highlight the need to understand what foreign claims is all about. In the end, the Soldier on the ground has more power than any other person to ensure we pay worthy claims. In other words, every Soldier reading this article is a foreign claims commissioner. Congratulations!

There are really two types of claims we can and do pay. The first type is noncombat claims. The single most common reason why claims are denied is because of a rule called the combat exclusion. This rule says that U.S. Forces are not required to pay for damage from combat operations.

(go to next page)

(continued from page 4)

For ricochets, explosions, and other operations involving hostile fire, even if U.S. Forces make an error, payment is not allowed, because this is the kind of damage happening during combat.

As a rule of thumb, we will pay for damage that happens because of accidents. There are plenty of them. Payable claims can arise from driving too fast, test-firing a weapon in the wrong place, occupying someone's land for a long time, drilling into a pipe you did not expect when looking to fill sandbags, causing debris to fly from controlled detonations, or other acts that do not relate to combat. Payable claims also arise from items lost at entry points during visits to Camp Taji. For damage occurring during raids, items U.S. Forces confiscate for security reasons, and other issues where threats are possible but not clear, these claims will be evaluated on a case by case basis. The evidence you provide will be the key.

Because there is so much variety, and the chance is high the claimant will file a claim anyway, you should do a statement about significant incidents where it seems likely a claim will be filed. Turn these into the Legal Office, and we will keep them on file. Sometimes, even if a claim can not be paid under the Foreign Claims Act, there could be other ways to pay the claimants. This is why it is good to keep a record anyway.

The second type of claims we pay are claims with full information. Even the most worthy claim will be denied if we can not prove it is the fault of U.S. Forces or if there is not enough information to investigate. There are cases where Soldiers have run out of claims cards and do not do anything,

or they provide no description of what happened on the claims card itself. Below is a reproduction of a standard claims card.

This card is great because it notifies the claimant where to go. But it is terrible because it gives no space to include key information.

The fix to this problem is easy; write a short statement on a piece of note paper or anything, even a piece of MRE cardboard. Put your name and unit on the paper and a description of what happened, and get it to the legal office at Building 543. In fact, if you treat the claim just like you would treat statements for detainees with sketches and explanations of who, what, why, when, and where, the process would work out great. Photos speak a million words.

Full information is even more important to address damage that is not the fault of U.S. Forces. For example, Soldiers on patrol are often approached by claimants who say damage happened a few days before. If Soldiers fill out a claims card without saying this is a report of past damage, it will look like they were eye-witnesses to the event. To

protect against this, you should always indicate that you only took the report and did not witness it.

The following quick checklist should be of help:

- Do not make any promises about whether a claim will be paid or not, but inform potential claimants they can file at the GIC, which is located right outside of Gunner Gate.
- List your full name, contact information, your unit and the date and time.
- List whether you are a witness to the incident or just relaying the information.
- List other witnesses who might be involved or official agencies that could have been involved (like Iraqi police on scene or an ambulance).
- Put in a sketch, diagram, or other list.
- List whose fault you think caused the damage and why and list why you think the claim should be paid or not.
- List the identification number of the victims or a description.
- List the name of any translators involved.
- Bring all this information to the Legal Office at Building 543 or e-mail it to Capt. Evan Seamone at

evan.seamone@BCTIID4.army.mil

Alertness to potential claims and consideration of these key points above will ensure that the claims process runs smoothly, as intended. In Foreign Claims, nothing can substitute for your skill and experience interacting with the Iraqi people. For this reason, Soldiers are foreign claims commissioners just as much as they are ambassadors for the United States. What a resume.

Raider Brigade Chaplain Corner:

What goes around, comes around

By Chaplain (Maj.) Steve Feriante
1st BCT Chaplain

His name was Fleming and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to make a living for his family he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran... there, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself.

Farmer Fancy saved the lad from a slow and terrifying death. The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the

father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved.

"I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life."

"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied waving off the offer.

At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked.

"Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal," said the nobleman. "Let me provide him with the level of education my own son will enjoy. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll no doubt grow to be a man we both will be proud of."

And that he did. Farmer Fleming's son attended the very best schools

and in time; graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the same nobleman's son who was saved from the bog was stricken with pneumonia. What saved his life this time? Penicillin. The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

What goes around comes around.



African American History observation

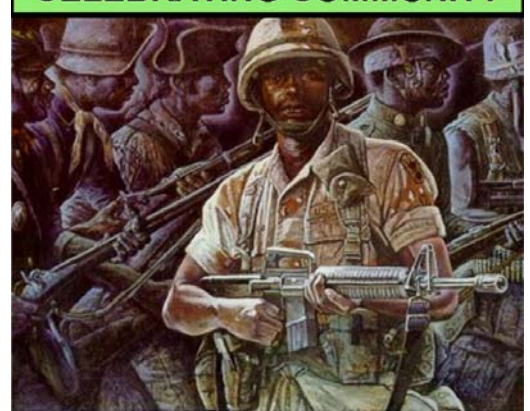
By SFC Michael Horwath
AVN BDE EOA/SARC

The United States has observed black history in some form since 1926 as an annual event. It was first known as "Negro History Week" and over time evolved into "African American History Month," even though black Americans had been an integral part of America since early colonial times. When the idea of an observance originated, African American history had barely begun to be

studied and was rarely documented.

Camp Taji will celebrate African American History Month Feb. 22, at the Camp Taji Eagle Ministry Center, Building 130, at 1 p.m. This cultural event, hosted by the Combat Aviation Brigade and sponsored by the Equal Opportunity offices of Camp Taji, will include music both live and recorded, an educational slide presentation, a poetry reading and refreshments. Guests speaking at the event will be Sgt. Maj. Richard Ballard, the Combat Aviation Brigade plans and operations sergeant major.

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY



AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

CAMP TAJI OBSERVANCE
Eagle Ministry Center Bldg 130
22 February 2006
1300hrs

Education, Entertainment, and Food

Raider Brigade Safety S.T.O.P.P.

Who's responsible for your safety?

By Frank Partyka
1st BCT Combat Readiness

Everyone agrees that safety is important. But, who is responsible for your safety? Is it your commander, first sergeant or everyone in between? The answer is yes. But, it goes further than that. You are also responsible for your safety.



Everything you do, both on and off-duty has consequences. If you don't adhere to established standards, you may find yourself in a world of hurt. We always think it will be the

other guy, never us. Then one day it does happen to us and we wonder why.

Keeping you in the fight is important in more ways than one. Someone out there is depending on you to be there for them. Here, it is probably your battle buddy. Back home it may be a loved one waiting for you to return to them.

We are operating in an area of the world that is very different from where we come. You must be aware of the many hazards we face on a daily basis. Consider not only the hazards outside the wire when you are on patrol, but the hazards inside the wire also.

These include electrical wiring, dual voltage, low hanging wires, potential for fire, vehicle operations, weapons handling, non-potable water,

etc... The list goes on and on. But, if you pay attention to your safety briefs, adhere to standards, and watch out for your battle buddy, it should all turn out okay.

If you read your FORSCOM S.T.O.P.P. Card, you'll see that it says -



Stop
Think
Observe
Plan
Proceed with SAFETY

Standards and discipline are
the best control measures!

Raider Safety



U.S., Iraqis working together to root out terrorists, unify country

by Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt
Editor, Raider Review

Soldiers of the 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team and members of the Iraqi army went out Jan. 21, together, to question suspected terrorists and recover a weapons cache. Although the intelligence proved to be faulty, the Iraqis had the chance to take the lead in the search while the Americans jumped on the chance to train the Iraqis.

Here is a short photo essay of the cordon and search event.



Iraqis take the lead... Soldiers from the Iraqi army patrol a local street near Camp Taji, Iraq, while Soldiers of the 1st BCT head back to conduct an After Action Review. The Iraqis took the lead in the operation, while the American Soldiers were in the background training the soldiers of the growing Iraqi army.



Soldiers stumble upon a local jackass while patrolling the area.



Iraqi soldiers stop for a minute to take a picture after searching a local house for illegal weapons and suspected criminals.



Cpl. Murl Trainham, of the 1st STB PSD team, checks his night scope to see if his sight picture is on target.



Lt. Col. John Cross, commander of 1st STB, calls in before heading out to the suspected terrorists site.



Lt. Col. John Cross, commander of 1st STB, an interpreter and Iraqi soldiers talk about the mornings event.



An Iraqi soldier takes the lead in a combined patrol.

Combined cordon and search brings OIF mission closer to end

By Pfc. Edgar Reyes
Staff writer, Raider Review

Soldiers from the 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team supported members of the Iraqi army in conducting a cordon and search Jan. 20 on a suspected illegal weapons dealer at a house near here.

Information gathered before the mission pointed to the dwelling as the middle ground between the buyers and sellers of illegal weapons and materials used to construct improvised explosive devices.

U.S. Soldiers met with Iraqi soldiers before the mission to rehearse the movement plan to and from the objective location, safety procedures, actions on the objective and battle drills upon enemy contact.

"The U.S. Soldiers were tasked with the inner and outer cordon, while the main effort was tasked to the Iraqi



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Charles Gill

A 9th Iraqi Army Division soldier observes his sector during a cordon and knock mission Friday near here. This mission was part of a combined operation with 7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 1st BCT.

army who was responsible for going in and searching the house," said Capt. Andy Whitford, Troop C commander, 7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt. "A basic plan was made, which left room for the Iraqis to search the

room as they saw fit without too much help from the U.S. Soldiers."

Bomb sniffing dogs and mine detectors were provided by U.S. Soldiers to facilitate the search for _____ (go to page 13, Iraqi)

4-42 keeps MSR Tampa moving, safe

By Capt. Douglas Wilbur
4th Bn., 42nd FA Regt.

Securing Main Supply Route (MSR) Tampa outside Camp Taji, Iraq, is no easy job, but the Straight Arrows of 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment are always up to the task.

Soldiers of the battalion run

patrols along the MSR 24 hours a day and very little escape their attention. They ensure that both civilian and military traffic are safe from improvised explosive devices as well as anything else Anti-Iraqi Forces may have in mind.

There is no typical day for the troops on the MSR sweep and they are always prepared for the unexpected. However, most of the situations they encounter are similar to

what any state trooper in the United States would expect to see on an average day. Iraqi motorists are regularly outside Camp Taji's gates and require assistance, and the patrol does what it can to help.

The MSR patrol occasionally encounters a medical emergency and has to provide immediate medical treatment, but they are always well prepared with a well-trained combat _____ (go to page 13, Taji)

Renovated Taji Cinema opens, two medical clinics set to open

By Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt
Editor, *Raider Review*

As the partnership between the Iraqi army and the Coalition grows each and every day, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers poured more than \$3.5 million into the local Iraqi community to open a renovated Iraqi army theater and is getting ready to open two renovated health clinics.

The theater is now available to the 15,000 Iraqi troops who call Camp Taji their home. The facility not only improves the quality of life for the troops, but also cements a friendship growing between Coalition forces and the Iraqi army.

"I look forward to working together to complete many projects like these," said Brig. Gen. William McCoy, commander of the Gulf Region Division, Army Corps of Engineers. "We have 3,600 projects and almost 2,200 completed.

"Iraq and the Iraqi army are getting better every day," McCoy added. "We believe we are part of a great team of Iraqis and the Corps of Engineers, who



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt

Brig. Gen. William McCoy, commander for the Gulf Region Division of the Army Corps of Engineers and Col. Alaa Ahmed, base commander for the Iraqi side of Camp Taji cut the ribbon together at the grand opening of the Taji Cinema on Camp Taji, Jan. 28. The cinema underwent a \$754,000 renovation.

together can rebuild Iraq."

The Taji Cinema, which was destroyed during the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, had the old roof removed and replaced, 500 seats re-upholstered and a restroom area with eight toilets installed. The project cost \$754,000 and took almost seven months to complete.

"This facility will offer many activities, ceremonies and show a lot of training videos to train the Iraqi army and the new Iraq," said Iraqi Col. Alla Ahmed, base commander for the Iraqi side of Camp Taji. "This is a monument to the wave of freedom our country is now experiencing."

In addition to the theater, two health clinics are taking shape and are expected to open in the next couple of weeks. The \$3 million project gives Iraqi soldiers accessibility to medical clinics with some of the latest equipment in

medical technology.

"This facility will be a vast improvement from the last facility," said Air Force Maj. Stephen Griep, an orthopedic physician who calls Bitburg, Germany his home. "We can see up to 200 patients a day, and when you see only 200 patients a day out of 15,000 troops, that's a pretty good ratio. My hats off to the preventative medicine team we have in place."

The health clinic features five exam rooms, one isolation room, a dental clinic and a x-ray machine. The existing clinic sees only 150 Iraqi soldiers daily and has essentially no modern medical equipment. The clinics' doors are expected to open in the next couple of weeks.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt

A state-of-the-art x-ray machine is one of the updated pieces of equipment in the renovated medical clinics for the Iraqi army.

Brushing your teeth three times a day, keeps the dentist away

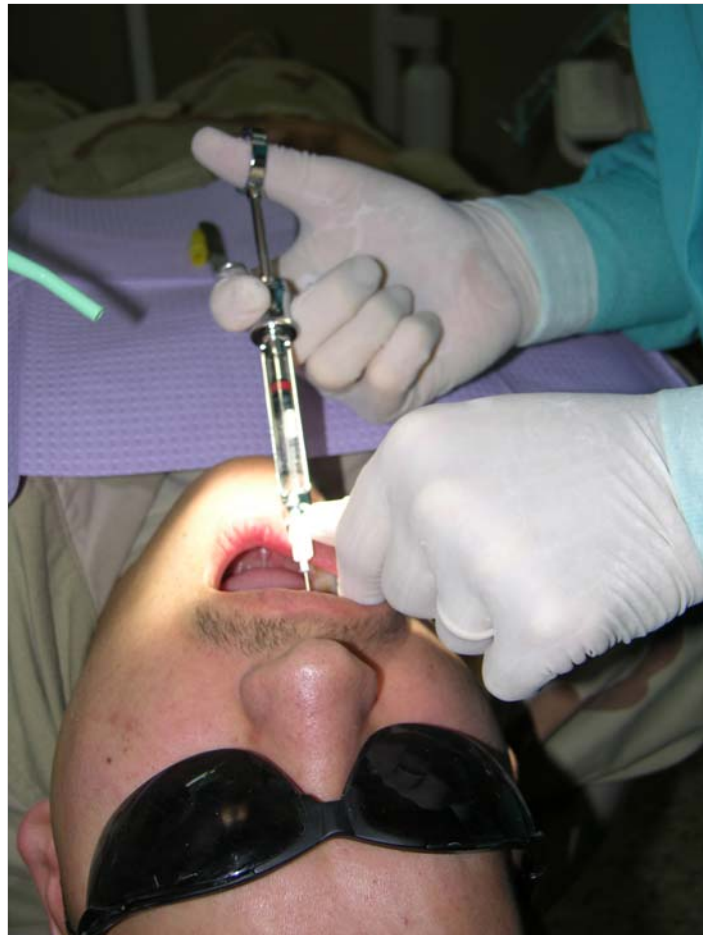
By Pfc. Edgar Reyes
Staff Writer, Raider Review

Lack of personal hygiene in a field environment can take its toll on what can be one of the most neglected parts of a Soldier's body: their teeth.

Many times, Soldiers claim they do not have the time to brush their teeth between back-to-back missions or they are too tired to brush their teeth after coming back from a long mission. These habits, mixed with an average Soldier's diet of soda, fruit juices and desserts with every meal, can lead to an accelerated rate of decay in a Soldier's teeth.

"We do a lot of oral surgeries, fillings and root canals," said Capt. Brandon Dever, dentist, 502nd Dental Company, 30th Medical Brigade. "Not brushing your teeth, not flossing and drinking anything that is not water after every meal causes rapid decay in Soldier's teeth."

Regular dental prophylaxis from a dental hygienist is not available on Camp Taji like it is in the states.



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes

Pfc. Ennius Collazo, a medium helicopter mechanic from 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation Brigade, receives anesthetic before going into oral surgery at the Camp Taji Dental Clinic.

"Appointments are prioritized by level of pain and infection," Dever said. "Someone who needs a root canal procedure will get an appointment first before someone who needs to get their tooth pulled. You can go a long time without getting your teeth cleaned as long as you are cleaning your own teeth."

"Your teeth are

important," said Spc. Joshua Gregory, infantryman, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. "If you have a terrible toothache, you can't perform your duties at 100 percent."

"A toothbrush and toothpaste are really easy to take along with you

anywhere you go," Gregory added. "You can stick it in your cargo pocket and have it with you no matter where you are. I know, because I have done it. What's an extra three minutes to brush your teeth going to cost you?"

Another aspect of dental hygiene that is overlooked is flossing.

Brushing alone only removes 60 percent of the plaque on your teeth leaving 40 percent in your mouth waiting to feed off of sugars and excrete acids that rot your teeth. Flossing and using mouth wash, regularly, can remove the leftover plaque left after brushing your teeth.

"A lot of people think flossing is just putting a string in between your teeth and then that's it," said Dever. "You have to actually try to scrape the side of each tooth clean of plaque for it to be effective."

"One good thing I learned in dental school is that you only have to floss the teeth you want to keep," said Dever. "If you take care of your teeth from birth and through life, you will be able to keep all your natural teeth when you get older instead of wearing dentures."

Mail, an important part of being deployed away from loved ones

By Pfc. Edgar Reyes
Staff Writer, Raider Review

Ever since the United States was engaged in the Revolutionary War, mail has played an integral part in boosting Soldiers morale and giving them the will power to carry out any mission.

One such Soldier who plays a part in boosting morale is Spc. Nigeria Moten, a postal specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, who makes the delivery of other Soldiers' mail her daily mission here.

"If we didn't have someone getting our mail and sorting it for us, we would have a lot of frustrated Soldiers who probably would not perform to the best of their abilities," said Pfc. Ronald Pierre-Paul, chaplain assistant, HHC, 1st STB. "She (Moten) plays a big role in the Army mission by boosting our morale with every letter and package that she gets for us."

The United States Postal Service has had a long relationship with the Department of Defense. Post offices throughout the country accept mail and packages for military personnel and deliver them to military installations throughout the United States. For military personnel stationed overseas, mail is delivered to gateway sites in New York, Newark, San Francisco, Miami and Chicago.

For Soldiers stationed here in Iraq, mail is shipped from gateway sites to



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Edgar Reyes

Sgt. Stephanie Horanburg of HHC, 1st STB, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. receives a package from Spc. Nigeria Moten, postal clerk for HHC, 1st STB, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. here on Camp Taji, Iraq. Many feel getting a letter or package means more than email, because it shows people care enough to sit down and take the time to write.

Baghdad, where postal clerks then deliver the mail to each individual camp. From the camps, mail is broken down into brigades, battalions, companies and then to the individual Soldier.

If you've ever wondered why we get our mail sent for free, the president has the authority to permit servicemembers to send personnel correspondence free of charge from places such as Iraq, Afghanistan and certain surrounding countries during times of war.

"Sometimes sorting mail is real fast and sometimes there is such a large volume of mail that it takes over two hours to sort it all out," said Moten. "It makes me feel happy when I give

people mail, because I know that I'm doing my part in keeping their morale up in a time of war."

Even to this day, mail is an important part of keeping Soldiers morale high in arduous situations. Something as small as a letter, can motivate him enough to carry on his mission despite all obstacles standing before him.

"Getting an e-mail is quicker than getting mail," said Pfc. Bridgette Rivera, logistics clerk, HHC, 1st STB. "But getting mail shows you that people care enough to sit down and take their time to write a letter rather than typing up a quick message in an e-mail. An e-mail might be quicker, but a letter means so much more."

Iraqi Soldiers take lead in local search

continued from page 9 —

buried explosives around the perimeter.

“I think it was a successful mission for our unit and for the Iraqi army,” said Sgt. 1st Class Randy Adams, platoon leader, 7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt. “Their info was credible and, being that it is the first time we worked together, we did pretty well.”

The 1st BCT is located here to support the Iraqi army. Soldiers, of the brigade are focused on



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Charles Gill

With the aid of a night vision device stuck to the end of a camera, Soldiers with the 1st BCT and Iraqi soldiers from the 9th Iraqi Army Division conduct a combined cordon and search on a dwelling outside Camp Taji, Iraq, Jan. 20.

training, coaching and mentoring the Iraqi army, so

they can provide a safe and secure environment. The

goal is for them to conduct these types of operations on their own.

“The Iraqi army was very well disciplined when they were rehearsing their actions on the objective and their movement techniques seemed pretty in sync,” Adams added. “Every chance we get to have the Iraqi army conduct their own operations and perform them well, brings us a step closer to finishing the overall mission in Iraq and going back home.”

Taji main route patrolled 24/7 by Artillery

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medic who has all the supplies he needs. The most difficult emergency they respond to is when civilians are injured, especially children, having been attacked by the AIF.

Master Sgt. Robert Adams of the Viper Team takes it personally when he treats injured children. “I am a father of three boys, and it gets to me when I see little kids get hurt.”

The Soldiers on the MSR clearance start their day with a thorough round of pre-combat checks (PCC’s). This is an essential daily ritual Soldiers take very seriously. They also perform battle drills, so they can react with speed and accuracy, which allows them to quickly overwhelm the AIF.

According to 1st Lt. Neftali Santos from the Black Dragons, rehearsals are a must. “Battle drills and daily rehearsals definitely boost the confidence of my Soldiers before

we go on patrol.”

The patrols have encountered IEDs before, and have managed to locate them and ensure they are deactivated before they inflict damage to passing vehicles.

Adams recalls his experience with an IED. “When you get hit by one, time sort of stops for a second and you see the flash and the noise,” Adams said who recalls his experience with an IED. “Then its dirt and black smoke pouring over your truck. Then time picks back up and you start reacting.”

The Iraqi army is increasingly assuming more responsibility for



U.S. Army photo courtesy of 4th Bn., 42nd FA Regt.

Master Sgt. Robert Adams, 4th Bn., 42nd FA Regt., 1st BCT patrols Main Supply Route (MSR) Tampa just outside Camp Taji, Iraq. The battalion conducts sweeps of MSR Tampa 24/7 to ensure the safety of local Iraqi civilians and ensure force protection measures are in place for soldiers who reside on Camp Taji.

security. It is now common to see Iraqi units along MSR Tampa, and as they improve, they will take over the patrols from Coalition forces altogether.

Chapel hosts Cox Memorial Ceremony

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Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Army Achievement Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the Multinational Forces Observers Medal, the Combat Action Badge, the Army Parachutist Badge and the Air Assault Badge.

He also graduated from the University of Texas in 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English.

"I met Tim when I took command," said Capt. Mark Paine, commander of Co. B, 1st Bn., 66th AR. "Tim was my go to guy. I could give him the toughest mission and he would never let me down.

"Tim always amazed us by his



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt

Soldiers from the 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. pay their respects to Capt. Simon Timothy Cox at his memorial ceremony at the Eagle Ministry Chapel. Cox was killed in action Feb. 2 by an improvised explosive device outside the gates of Camp Taji, Iraq.

accomplishments," Paine added. "He did it all. In the last days of his life, he worked 20 hours a day to accomplish the mission. Of all the souls I've met,

his was the greatest."

Cox is survived by his wife, Jeni, and his two sons, Simon, 3, and James, 1.

Raider soldiers working hard every day

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but a few examples of how the Raider Brigade Soldiers have adapted to the mission here in Iraq and are making a difference.

We continue to operate in a relatively safe manner given this complex environment. I want every Soldier to continue to check themselves and his or her buddy on the application of basic standards to preserve our combat power. My biggest concern is operation of the

M1114 up-armored HMMWV. They are made to keep the crew alive inside if struck by small arms or an IED. They are not made for speed or maneuverability. Too many Soldiers are dead due to M1114 accidents. Our speed limit is 37mph - don't exceed it. Seatbelts are mandatory. We all know the standards here - let's ensure we're applying them.

Finally, I want our Soldiers to realize that we are operating in a country

that now has their own democratically elected government, a rule of law and police, a court system and other institutions that equate to a sovereign country. We are now guests in their country - and we need to act like guests. Apply the "3 P's" when operating outside the FOB: be polite, be professional, and be prepared to apply deadly force.

You should be proud of what you're doing here in Iraq - I certainly am proud

of you and your contribution. What we are doing here is making a difference. Keep up the great work.

Raiders....

R6



Cavalry squadron commander attends Taji town meeting

By Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt
Editor, Raider Review

The commanders of 1st Brigade Combat Team and the 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, representatives of the Iraqi army and the Iraqi police and local community leaders attended a city council meeting here to discuss how to fix problems members of the local community are having.

Col. James Pasquarette, commander of the 1st BCT, started the meeting with the introduction of Lt. Col. Dave Thompson, commander of 7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., whose battalion's mission is to support the Iraqi army in a sector around Camp Taji, Iraq.

"I do appreciate you working to solve your people's problems," said Pasquarette. "It is our intent to have you solve your own problems internally. If you need some support, come to him (Thompson) and he will help you out. Thank you for what you are doing."

Problems discussed at the meeting were electricity, traffic, security checkpoints, insurgent activity and potable water. At times the discussions became heated among the council members, but Thompson informed them of a system in place to help with one problem, insurgent activity.

"Three days ago, I was out and there was a murder in the street," Thompson said. "I believe it's



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt

Lt. Col. Dave Thompson, commander of 7th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. attends a city council meeting at Taji, Iraq, to discuss problems the local community is having with security, potable water and traffic.

important that we control criminal's coming in and out (of prison and Taji).

"There is room for improvement, but I will work with the Iraqi police and the Iraqi army to fix this problem," Thompson expressed to the council. "I hope to come up with a solution within the next couple of weeks."

One solution the Coalition forces, Iraqi army and the Iraqi police have established is a hot line, which allows local residents to discreetly notify authorities of insurgent activities. What the hot line does is allows members of the community to participate in the War on Terrorism by tipping authorities to the whereabouts of known terrorists or terrorists activities.

This tip line not only makes the transition to the Iraqi army from

Coalition forces smoother, but it also makes the community a safer place to live.

"We've established a phone line, where residents who have problems with insurgents can call and the Coalition, Iraqi army and the Iraqi police will bring in the correct forces to deal with the problem," said Thompson. "Communication between Coalition forces, the Iraqi army and the Iraqi police are all working together. We've had many situations where we work together."

Although not all the problems were solved, members of the council vowed to continue talks as the Iraqi security forces and the legitimate democratic government of Iraq continues to develop and build relationships with each other to support the Iraqi people.

Iraqi locals benefit from free medical aid, civil affairs giving

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homes and at school.

"This town is primarily farmers, so a lot of times they just go without," said Capt. Allan Renazco, the civil military officer for 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 1st BCT. "This is a measure of good will towards the community, and we are working with the local leaders to see what else they need."

"This is the first time we are doing this, but historically, it has worked out well for other units," Renazco added. "In the near future, we are going to give them two compact water treatment units and an electrical generator, which will give them fresh water and electricity."

The Taji area is mostly a rural farm setting where many of the locals have never had any type of medical treatment during their lifetime. This type of operation gives medics a



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Hunt

Sgt. Erika Brown, medic with Co. C, 4th Spt. Bn., 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. checks out a local Iraqi man's throat at the brigade's medical capabilities exercise held just outside the gates of Camp Taji, Iraq, Jan. 25.

chance to take a look at the local civilians' health issues and to bond with the community.

"Colds and coughing have been treated mostly today," said 1st Lt. Saibatu Mansaray, a physician's assistant with Company C, 4th Support Battalion, 1st BCT. "This is the first time I've done this here and this is a great thing. Everyone walks out happy with a smile on their face."

"I really like these types

of missions," said Sgt. Erika Brown, a medic with Co. C, 4th Spt. Bn., 1st BCT. "This helps us get integrated with the communities, and I think it's a great start, especially when they see the Iraqi army working with us. I hope to do this again, because everyone in my unit wants to do this."

In addition to providing medical care, Soldiers from Co. A, 490th CA Bn. gave out a little kindness of their own.

"Today, we are handing out supplies locals of the community can really use," said Master Sgt. Ronnie Reece, team sergeant with the civil affairs unit. "This type of exercise helps build community relations and helps provide humanitarian and medical care for the locals. It also puts a positive Iraqi and Coalition face on what we are doing in the community."

Not only do Soldiers from the Iraqi army and Coalition forces feel the day's event was a success, but local civilians feel the same as well.

"I feel that it is good to give something back to the community," said a local man at the event who teaches engineering and computer science at a school. "The best thing they (Coalition forces) can do is leave a good impression on the people. We are all human beings and a lot of great things can happen when we work together."

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